

Message Text

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ACTION INR-07

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FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6357

AMEMBASSY MANILA

INFO AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 0204

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PDIP, UR, RP

SUBJ: BIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION ON VALERIAN MIKHAILOV, FIRST SOVIET
AMBASSADOR TO MANILA

1. WE ASSUME DEPARTMENT SENDING EMBASSY MANILA NORMAL BIO
INFORMATION ON AMBASSADOR MIKHAILOV.

2. MIKHAILOV HAS SPENT VIRTUALLY HIS ENTIRE CAREER
IN U.S.-SOVIET RELATIONS, WITH ALTERNATING
ASSIGNMENTS IN WASHINGTON AND IN THE USA DIVISION OF
THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS IN MOSCOW. HE IS
EASY-GOING, SOFT-SPEAKING AND, IN CONTRAST TO SOME OF HIS
COLLEAGUES, WAS RARELY CONTENTIOUS OR OVERLY
DISPUTATIOUS IN HIS DEALINGS WITH US. AT THE SAME
TIME, HIS MILD MANNER SUGGESTS A CERTAIN LIMIT ON
HIS EFFECTIVENESS WITHIN THE SOVIET BUREAUCRACY. IF
WE HAD PROBLEMS, WE COULD ALWAYS GET A SYMPATHETIC
EAR FROM MIKHAILOV, BUT THE RESULTS WERE FEW. FOR
THIS REASON WE USUALLY WENT TO ANOTHER DEPUTY IN THE
USA DIVISION IF WE WANTED SOMETHING DONE. IF WE
WERE SEEKING A CONGENIAL LUNCHEON OR DINNER
COMPANION, HOWEVER, MIKHAILOV OFTEN WAS THE
PREFERRED GUEST.

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3. HE IS A STRONG FAMILY MAN, WHO IS PARTICULARLY
PROUD OF HIS INFANT GRANDDAUGHTER (HIS SON'S CHILD).
AS WE WOULD BE EXPECTED FROM A PERSON WITH HIS LONG
EXPERIENCE IN U.S. - SOVIET RELATIONS, MIKHAILOV
SPEAKS SERVICEABLE ENGLISH, THOUGH NOT SO FLUENTLY
AS SOME OF THE OFFICERS OF THE USA DIVISION. MRS.
MIKHAILOV CAN MANAGE SOME ENGLISH, BUT BOTH ARE

CLEARLY MORE COMFORTABLE IN RUSSIAN, WHICH WE AS
A RULE USED DURING OUR CONTACTS WITH THEM IN MOSCOW.

4. MIKHAILOV'S APPOINTMENT SUGGESTS THAT THE
SOVIETS SOUGHT AN AFFABLE PROFESSIONAL DIPLOMAT TO
GIVE A LOW-KEY IMAGE TO THEIR NEW EMBASSY IN MANILA.
HE IS INDEED A LIKEABLE MAN AND ALMOST THE
ANTITHESIS OF THE STEROTYPE OF THE BOORISH, TABLE-
THUMPING RUSSIAN OFFICIAL. WE DOUBT THAT HE SWINGS
MUCH POLITICAL WEIGHT IN MOSCOW, BUT HIS DISARMING
MANNER MAY SERVE TO REDUCE (PERHAPS UNJUSTIFIABLY)
ANY EXISTING PHILIPPINE SUSPICIONS OF SOVIET
INTENTIONS. 8* 9, HE WAS AN APPROPRIATE CHOICE
FROM THE SOVIET POINT OF VIEW FOR THEIR FIRST
AMBASSADOR TO THE PHILIPPINES.

5. WHEN HE CALLS ON AMBASSOR NEWSOM, IT WOULD
BE APPRECIATED IF THE LATTER WOULD CONVEY TO HIM
THE REGARDS OF HIS FRIENDS IN EMBASSY MOSCOW.
MATLOCK

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